

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING AND PUBLIC COMMENT

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) seek written and oral comments from interested persons on the development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for the North River. This stream was listed on the 1996 303(d) TMDL Priority List and Report as impaired due to violations of the State's general standard for aquatic life (i.e., a benthic impairment) and the State's water quality standard for bacteria. The general standard impairment includes a 16.32-mile segment from Cooks Creek to the confluence with the South River. The bacteria impairment includes a 24.96-mile segment from Beaver Creek to the confluence with the South River.

Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act and §62.1-44.19:7.C of the Code of Virginia require DEQ to develop TMDLs for pollutants responsible for each impaired water contained in Virginia's 303(d) TMDL Priority List and Report.

DEQ has drafted a bacteria TMDL for the North River and is seeking comment on that draft. As part of the benthic TMDL development, DEQ conducted a stressor identification analysis. This analysis showed that benthic impairments in the North River were due to pollutants (sediment and phosphorus) identified in several TMDLs developed for North River tributaries. The analysis also concluded that implementation of those sediment and phosphorus TMDLs on North River tributaries would eliminate

the benthic impairment on the North River mainstem. Based on these conclusions, a benthic TMDL was not developed for the North River mainstem. In the 2006 305(b) and 303(d) Water Quality Assessment Integrated Report, DEQ intends to recategorize the North River benthic impairment from EPA category 5A – an impaired water requiring a TMDL to EPA category 4A – an impaired water not requiring a TMDL, because a TMDL is already in place. DEQ is seeking comment on this action and the stressor analysis report.

A final public meeting to discuss the bacteria TMDL and the benthic stressor identification analysis will be held on **Monday, November 14, 2005, 7:00 p.m.** at John Wayland Elementary School cafeteria, 801 North Main Street, Bridgewater, VA 22812.

A copy of the draft bacteria TMDL report and the benthic stressor analysis report will be available for review on or before November 14, 2005 on the DEQ website at <http://www.deq.state.va.us/tmdl/tmdlrpts.html>. The public comment period for the draft report and the meeting will end on December 14, 2005. Written comments should include the name, address, and telephone number of the person submitting the comments and should be sent to Robert Brent, Department of Environmental Quality, 4411 Early Road, PO Box 3000, Harrisonburg, VA 22801, telephone (540) 574-7848, fax (540) 574-7878, or e-mail mbrent@deq.virginia.gov.